

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-09

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 H-01 SAJ-01

MBFR-03 GAC-01 EB-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01 RSR-01 /060 W
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R 231136 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8604

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION USNATO

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LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR/FR

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FIRST CALL ON ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: (A) PARIS 6843 NOTAL; (B) PARIS 6844 NOTAL; (C) PARIS 7140
NOTAL; (D) PARIS 6246 NOTAL; (E) STATE 48651 NOTAL;
(F) STATE 48829 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY. AMBASSADOR, ACCOMPANIED BY DCM AND EXEC.
ASST., CALLED ON ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER BETTENCOURT MARCH 20
TO LEAVE COPIES OF LETTER OF RECALL OF HIS PREDECESSOR AND LETTER
OF ACCREDITATION. CALL LASTED ONE HOUR AND TWENTY MINUTES.
ATMOSPHERE EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND RELAXED. DISCUSSION MAINLY
FOCUSED ON OUTCOME OFFRENCH ELECTION AND IMPORTANCE TO BOTH
COUNTRIES OF FRANCO- U. S. COOPERATION AND ALLIANCE. EXCHANGE ON
PANAMA, FORMAL DEMARCHE ON TERRORISM, AND COMPLIMENTS TO
DCM REPORTEDSEPTELS (REFS A, B, AND C).

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2. AFTER EXCHANGING INITIAL AMENITIES, AMBASSADOR CONGRATULATED BETTENCOURT ON OUTCOME OF FRENCH ELECTIONS. BETTENCOURT ADMITTED FRENCH HAD BEEN QUITE UNEASY BEFORE ELECTION AND CREDITED TWO APPEARANCES OF PRESIDENT POMPIDOU ON TELEVISION WITH GREAT IMPACT ON OUTCOME. COMMUNIST PARTY (PC) HAD EMERGED WITH CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH AND SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) HAD ALSO, LARGELY BECAUSE OF MITTERRAND' S SPEECHES AND TRAVELS AROUND COUNTRY, TAKEN ON NEW IMPORTANCE. THIS BETTENCOURT SAID COULD TURN OUT TO BE GOOD THING IF PS WOULD LEAVE PC; PROBABLY PS WILL NOT DO SO FOR SEVERAL YEARS, AT LEAST NOT BEFORE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN 1976.

3. BETTENCOURT SAID THERE WAS PARTICULAR SADNESS AT QUAI OVER DEFEAT MINISTER SCHUMANN WHICH HE ATTRIBUTED PARTLY TO BITTER PERSONAL CAMPAIGN WAGED AGAINST SCHUMANN AND PARTLY TO DEFECTION OF CATHOLICS, PARTICULARLY YOUNG CATHOLICS, TO PS. HE COMMENTED THAT YOUTH TENDED TO FLIRT WITH SOCIALISM, SOMETIMES WITH CONSIDERABLE IDEALISM, WITHOUT BEING AWARE OF HOW THEY PLAYED INTO HANDS OF PC. AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED POLITE REGRET OVER DEFEAT OF SCHUMANN BUT COMMENTED USG SAW OVER- ALL ELECTION RESULT AS VICTORY FOR POMPIDOU.

4. BETTENCOURT AGREED POMPIDOU' S ROLE HAD BEEN CRUCIAL. HE COMMENTED ON IRONY THAT GOVERNMENT OF CHABAN- DELMAS HAD IN FACT HAD COLOSSAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN SOCIAL FIELD. LIKEWISE, MESSMER HAD MADE NUMBER OF CONCRETE PROPOSALS IN SOCIAL FIELD TO ASSEMBLY BUT THEY WERE DISCOUNTED BY PUBLIC AS NOT BEING " CREDIBLE," USUALLY ON GROUND THAT FUNDS COULD NOT BE BUDGETED TO PAY FOR THEM. AT SAME TIME, PC COULD MAKE PROPOSALS FOR MORE SWEEPING AND MORE COSTLY WHICH CLEARLY COULD NOT BE FUNDED AND YET WERE ACCEPTED AS ENTIRELY CREDIBLE BY PUBLIC.

5. IN REPLY TO QUESTION, AMBASSADOR SAID HE FELT VERY WELCOME FROM PRESS RECEPTION HE HAD HAD ON ARRIVAL, BUT MORE IMPORTANT, HE FELT PARTICULARLY WELCOME AND GRATEFUL THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU HAD SUGGESTED HIS PRESENTING CREDENTIALS THIS WEEK.

6. BETTENCOURT SAID AMBASSADOR WOULD HAVE DIFFICULT TASK IN PARIS. IN SEVERAL FORA AND ESPECIALLY NEXT SEPTEMBER, FRANCE AND U. S. WOULD HAVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS. AMBASSADOR WOULD BE BETTER PLACED THAN OTHERS TO MAKE FRENCH PROBLEMS UNDERSTOOD, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO MAKE FRANCE SEE U. S. POINT OF VIEW, AND TO FIND THE COMMON

GROUND BETWEEN THEM THAT, BETTENCOURT EMPHASIZED, WAS "INDISPENSABLE." AMBASSADOR REPLIED HE SHARED THIS VIEW OF HIS ROLE AND HOPED, AS DID PRESIDENT NIXON, THAT THE DIFFERENCES WHICH WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY ARISE ON ECONOMIC, MONETARY, AND TRADE ISSUES IN COMING MONTHS WOULD NOT DISTURB UNDERLYING FUNDAMENTAL POLITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF OUR RELATIONS.

7. BETTENCOURT RESPONDED THAT HE SAW STRUCTURE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SUPPORTED BY A FEW FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES, THE KEY TO WHICH FOR FRANCE WAS ITS ALLIANCE WITH U. S. HE HOPED STRUCTURE OF RELATIONS WOULD NOT BE TOO SHAKEN BY ECONOMIC AND MONETARY PROBLEMS, COMMENTING THAT RECENT MONETARY CRISIS HAD SHAKEN IT CONSIDERABLY. EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHICH HAD AGREED ON A COMMON FLOAT SHOULD BE GIVEN ENOUGH TIME TO MAKE FLOAT WORK, SO AS TO PROVIDE CENTRAL KERNEL OF STABILITY FOR EUROPEAN UNITY. THIS WOULD ENABLE UK AND OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS ITALY EVENTUALLY TO REJOIN CENTRAL GROUP. IT WOULD BE BAD, IN HIS VIEW, IF CENTRAL GROUP DID NOT SURVIVE AND BROKE APART. EUROPE, HE SAID, WOULD NEVER BE AS UNIFIED AS U. S. BUT STRONG, CONFIDENT EUROPE, WHICH U. S. HAD FAVORED IN PAST, REMAINED IMPORTANT TO INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM. EUROPE, HE SAID, CANNOT ALLOW ITSELF TO BE BROKEN UP BY CHALLENGES FROM U. S., AND EVEN LESS SO BY CHALLENGES FROM THE USSR. ON OTHER HAND, IF STRONGER EUROPE EMERGES, ITS DOCTRINE WOULD BE VERY CLOSE TO THAT OF U. S. ON ALL IMPORTANT ISSUES, MONETARY, ECONOMIC, MILITARY, ETC.

8. BETTENCOURT SAID THAT AT RECENT DINNER WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASSIMOV, HE HAD MADE CLEAR THAT FOR FRANCE, THE U. S. IS "L' AMIE ALLIEE" (THE FRIEND, AND ALLY), BUT THAT THIS BASIC ALLIANCE WOULD NOT PREVENT FRANCE FROM SEEKING DETENTE WITH SOVIET UNION. BETTENCOURT SAID HE WOULD SAY SAME THING TO U. S. HE HOPED WE, WHO HAVE MADE OUR OWN EFFORTS TO WORK WITH SOVIET UNION, COULD UNDERSTAND THAT FRANCE, ON SAME CONTINENT AND NEARLY CONTIGUOUS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, COULD FIND MANY WAYS TO WORK WITH COMMUNIST WORLD WITHOUT GIVING UP ITS BASIC ALLIANCE WITH U. S. OR BEING CORRUPTED BY COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY. BETTENCOURT SAID HE MADE CLEAR TO ABRASSIMOV FRENCH COULD NEVER ACCEPT SOVIET IDEOLOGY.

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-09

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 H-01 SAJ-01

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R 231136 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8605

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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9. BETTENCOURT SEES THIS POLICY AS AN EXTENSION OF POLICY OF GENERAL DE GAULLE, MODIFIED IN CERTAIN RESPECTS. POMPIDOU'S FOREIGN POLICY, HE SAID, WAS INSPIRED BY THE SAME GENERAL PRINCIPLES AS THAT OF DE GAULLE, BUT WAS PERHAPS MORE NUANCED, AND MORE IN KEEPING WITH THE PRESENT ERA.

10. SPEAKING OF HIS OWN FUTURE, BETTENCOURT SAID HE WAS FOND OF HIS LITTLE OFFICE BUT DID NOT KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER HE WOULD KEEP IT. HE SAID WHEREVER HE MIGHT BE, AND EVEN IF HE WERE "NOTHING" IN THE FUTURE, HE WOULD STILL FEEL AND EXPRESS HIS VERY DEEP FRIENDSHIP FOR THE U. S. AMONG FRIENDS, HE SAID, ONE COULD SPEAK THE TRUTH, AND WHERE THERE WERE DIFFERENCES, HE EXPECTED TO SPEAK OF THEM FRANKLY.

11. HE SAID HE HAD RECENTLY SEEN CHRISTOPHER SOAMES ON LATTER'S WAY BACK FROM U. S. AND GOT FEELING THAT WE DO NOT FACE INSUR-
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MOUNTABLE DIFFICULTIES. BUT HE ADDED, WE SHOULD FIND A MEETING GROUND SOON, RATHER THAN LET MONETARY SITUATION DISINTEGRATE FURTHER AND LEAD TO OTHER DISORDERS.

12. AMBASSADOR AGREED WITH TENOR OF BETTENCOURT'S REMARKS AND ECHOED BETTENCOURT'S APPRECIATION OF CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN U. S. AND EUROPE BEING AT BASIS OF KIND OF INTERNATIONAL STRUCTURE WHICH U. S. WISHED TO SEE. THIS ALLIANCE, AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED, SERVED AS BASIS FOR BROAD AREAS OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S

FOREIGN POLICY SINCE TAKING OFFICE AND FOR HIS WHOLE EFFORT TO MOVE FROM " CONFRONTATION TO NEGOTIATION." AMBASSADOR MENTIONED HAVING HEARD SOME CRITICISM IN EUROPE TO EFFECT THAT U. S. WAS TRYING TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH SOVIET UNION OVER THE HEADS OF OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES. AMBASSADOR THOUGHT THIS WAS WHOLLY ERRONEOUS VIEW INSPIRED BY VERY SHORT TERM CONSIDERATIONS. HE THOUGHT AGREEMENTS COULD BE REACHED WITH SOVIET UNION LEADING TOWARD DETENTE AND LONG- TERM STABILITY WITHOUT CREATING ANY DIVISION BETWEEN U. S. AND ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES. AMBASSADOR SHARED BETTENCOURT'S HOPE THAT MONETARY SITUATION WILL NOW STABILIZE AND MENTIONED U. S. REPRESENTATIVES AT RECENT MONETARY TALKS IN PARIS FELT THAT FOR FIRST TIME MONETARY AUTHORITIES OF VARIOUS COUNTRIES INVOLVED HAD GOTTEN INTO DISCUSSIONS WITH PERHAPS MORE CANDOR AND WERE BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S POINT OF VIEW RATHER THAN STANDING ON SET POSITIONS.

13. AMBASSADOR SAID HE HAD MET WITH PRESIDENT NIXON JUST BEFORE LEAVING WASHINGTON AND PRESIDENT HAD EXPRESSED HIS OWN DESIRE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH PRESIDENT POMPIDOU AND WITH FRANCE IN ALL OF INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS AND FORA WHERE WE APPEARED TOGETHER. WE WOULD WELCOME, IN THIS CONNECTION, FRANCE'S TAKING GREATER ROLE IN MBFR TALKS IF FRANCE WISHED TO DO SO. WE ALSO EXPECTED THEM TO PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN CSCE. WHILE WE MIGHT HAVE DIFFERENCES OF VIEW ON INDIVIDUAL POINTS, WE SUPPORTED BASICALLY THE SAME POLICY AND GENERALLY THE SAME GOALS.

14. AMBASSADOR MENTIONED POLITICAL PRESSURES IN U. S. WHICH MIGHT CAUSE SOME DIFFICULTIES, PARTICULARLY GROWING PROTECTIONIST SENTIMENT, NOE- ISOLATIONIST TENDENCIES, AND PRESSURES SUCH AS THOSE REPRESENTED BY MANSFIELD AMENDMENT. PRESIDENT NIXON MUST TAKE SUCH PRESSURES INTO ACCOUNT IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO MAINTAIN BASICALLY INTERNATIONALIST AND OUTWARD- LOOKING POLICY. AMBASSADOR NOTED ANOMALY THAT MANY FORMER LIBERALS IN CONGRESS WHO

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HAD SUPPORTED INTERNATIONALIST VIEW HAVE NOW SWITCHED POSITIONS AND ARE MORE SKITTISH ABOUT INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY, DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, ETC. SUCH POLITICAL PRESSURES CREATE PROBLEMS AND AFFECT OUR POLICIES AND WHAT WE CAN DO BUT HAVE NOT CHANGED PRESIDENT NIXON'S OWN VIEWS AND BASIC PURPOSES.

15. BETTENCOURT, IN CLOSING, SAID HE HAD TO THANK AMBASSADOR FOR HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT (REFS D, E, AND F) WHICH " WENT TO OUR HEART." THE AMBASSADOR SAID THE STATEMENT EXPRESSED VERY MUCH HIS PERSONAL FEELINGS. IRWIN

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